

E. TYPES OF PURCHASES

There are several different types of purchases. Many of these will require different approaches. Since non-routine categories of purchases will frequently require more time to process, they should be minimized.

Unbudgeted capital expenditures - purchases not authorized in the department's current budget - must be authorized through a budget amendment by Commissioners' Court.

01. Non-Stocked Items:

These items are not stocked or warehoused by the County. They may, or may not, be a standardized item but are not in such constant demand as to be considered a supply or other stocked item. These items are procured by either bids or negotiated price quotes, according to the statutory or local requirements.

02. Stocked or Warehouse Items:

These items are in such constant usage by the County that they are stocked routinely. These items are usually purchased on annual contracts with provisions to replenish stocks as needed. These items should be standardized to the maximum extent possible.

03. Emergency:

Emergency purchases are made to meet a critical, unforeseen need of the County. Because the County's ability to serve the public would be impaired if purchases are not made immediately, emergency purchases are exempt from standard purchasing procedures. This includes (1) a public calamity to meet a necessity of the citizens or prospective public property; (2) the purchase is necessary to preserve and protect the public health or safety of County residents; or (3) the purchase is required due to unforeseen damage to public property. Emergency purchases over \$15,000 must be ratified by the Commissioners' Court and the County Auditor prior to purchasing.

04. Sole Source:

Sole source purchases are goods and services available from only one supplier. There may be just one vendor because of patents or copyrights, or simply because the vendor is the only one who supplies the goods or services. These purchases are exempt from the standard bidding requirements. The County will be required to certify that only one supplier is available. Sole source purchases over \$15,000 must be approved by Commissioners' Court and the County Auditor prior to purchasing.

05. Registrations:

Registrations for conferences, seminars and conventions for employees of the County should be processed through Purchasing. The application should be justified by the needs of the County and require department head authorization.

06. Publications:

Books, magazines, periodicals and newspapers should be processed through the Purchasing Department. The application should be justified by the needs of the County and should require department head's authorization.

07. Memberships:

Memberships in trade or professional organizations should be processed through the Purchasing Department. The application should be justified by the needs of the County and require department head authorization.

08. Services:

All types of services are needed by the County. The Purchasing Department will frequently procure these services on contracts by bids or sometimes without bidding. Professional services may need to be procured under proposals or special rules other than bids.

09. Work in Progress:

This may be exempted by the Commissioners' Court and paid in full by the day after work is performed.

10. Land and right-of-way:

This has been exempted by Commissioners' Court from competitive bidding.

11. Travel:

Arrangements for travel and reimbursements for travel expenses should be according to the procedures provided by the Auditor's office - pertaining to "travel".

12. High Technology and Insurance: RFP - Request for Proposals

Alternative to competitive bidding, in the case of high technology items and insurance, competitive proposals from vendors may be solicited by the County when, in the judgment of the Commissioners' Court, this procedure is preferable.

13. Equipment Maintenance Service Agreements:

Maintenance is arranged through the individual departments. Various group maintenance contracts have been, or will be, bid and blanket the needs of various departments.

14. State Catalog:

Computer hardware, software peripherals, and parts, over \$15,000, may be purchased via the Data Processing Department using authorized State of Texas catalogs, in lieu of quotes or bids if approved by Commissioners' Court.

15. State of Texas General Services Commission Contracts:

May be utilized for purchases (over \$15,000) by departments or County as a whole in lieu of quotes or bids if approved by Commissioners' Court.

16. Inter-local Agreements:

Houston/Galveston Area Council, or other inter-local agreements, may be used by departments for purchases, over \$15,000, in lieu of quotes or bids if approved by Commissioners' Court.